# SEX CRIMINALS

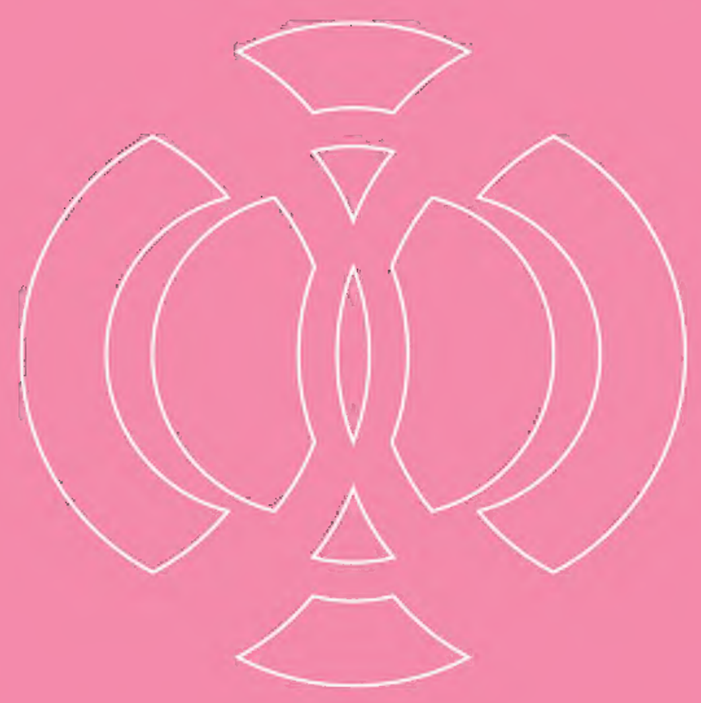
MATT FRACTION
CHIP ZDARSKY

## THE END: PART ONE

ISSUE 26

image

# SEX CRIMINALS
## CHAPTER 26



## "EVER FUCK SOMEBODY?"

MATT FRACTION

CHIP ZDARSKY

THOMAS K EDITING
TURNER LOBEY MANAGING EDITOR
ERIKA SCHNATZ PRODUCTION
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DEDICATED TO FINDING THE REAL KILLER

♪ "What is the fourth dimension?" ♩

Well allow me to answer your question, ladies.

My name is Eustice K Astroturf, and these five fine brothers behind me?

They. Are the Fourth Dimension.

Now, the Fourth Dimension is more than just a band... it's more than just a sound.

Girl, the Fourth Dimension... is a viiiiiiibe.

HANDJOB RIDGE
pop. 4 fingers, 1 thumb
PEEPER'S POINT

And tonight... that vibe is strong.

And like the Chunnel—the so-called channel-tunnel connecting England to France beneath the English Channel—that vibe is never gonna be finished.

Like Major League Baseball's World Series—our vibe is reliable. Dependable. And it's always gonna happen and it's never gonna stop suddenly for a year.

And like the careers of 4 Non Blondes, Tag Team, and Rozalla, fellow musical acts that broke around the same time we have, roughly around 1992-1993—

Our vibe will go on forever.

So girl, that's why our song is called:

Don't forget to pull—

Fuck

—ing love this song.

Never gonna pull never gonna pull never gonna pull—

Flan Save Me (A Piece)

...out of the fourth dimension...

Do they mean that in a Euclidean way or more of a...

Einstein / Minkowski-y way?

What's the difference?

One's geometry. The other's ... not.

People say "Time" but that's— there's semiotic and semantic issues there.

Planck Frames— that is—

—duration. As if "future" and "past" were, like, directions.

Yes, I'm certain these one-hit R&B wonders from 1992 didn't write a song about their deep love of road-head—

—but rather the conceptual notion of rotating outside of a linear array of time and space.

That's kind of like what we do.

When we. Y'know.

We rotate out of...

"Hey, you."

"Hey, you."

EXIT

I have kind of a weird question:

Do you think she was right?

Alix, I mean.

Jesus.

About what?

Ha.

Everything, I guess.

Was she right about everything?

Hey you.

Hey.

Hey, so.

I got shit figured out.

We're not...

I mean...

We're not really *traumatized*, are we?

Have you ever fucked somebody, like, actively-tried-to-destroy-someone's-life fucked somebody?

I mean... how do you all see this playing out?

Us versus Badal. Versus BankCorp and all of it.

Robbing a bank? Come on. That's not this movie, the caper, the heist.

*Masks* and *guns* and a *getaway car.*

BADALCORP

*Let* alone all that *money*—not like you could ever spend it, not these days. Might as well sign your name at the scene.

So, okay, so what? We *destroy* a bank?

Sure. Which one?

FAPHAM'S MASSIVE VIBRATOR ARCHIVAL QUARTERLY

There's branches. It's computers, the cloud—

You can't cut the head off a monster if the monster can't be touched, and these things, these... corporate...

*...entities?*

SEXUAL POLICE
FOR HOLDING THE THIN BLUEBALL LINE

The only thing that can kill them is money.

Like, *god-level* amounts of money. And power.

That's like fighting an idea. We're not going to hurt the bank.

So we can't rob a bank. Can't *destroy* the bank, all their branches, offices, ATMs, whatever—

—so all that's left to stop, to fight... is Badal.

Right?

All that's left is destroying a man's life, and I'm telling you, that's a hell of a thing. So I'm asking—

You ever really, really fuck somebody?

Because I promise you—Badal is a guy who *fucks* people.

AAAAA!!

Whoa.

Dang!

Oh my god Dewey, I'm so sorry—

Suze? Are you okay? What the hell was that?

God, it's so embarrassing.

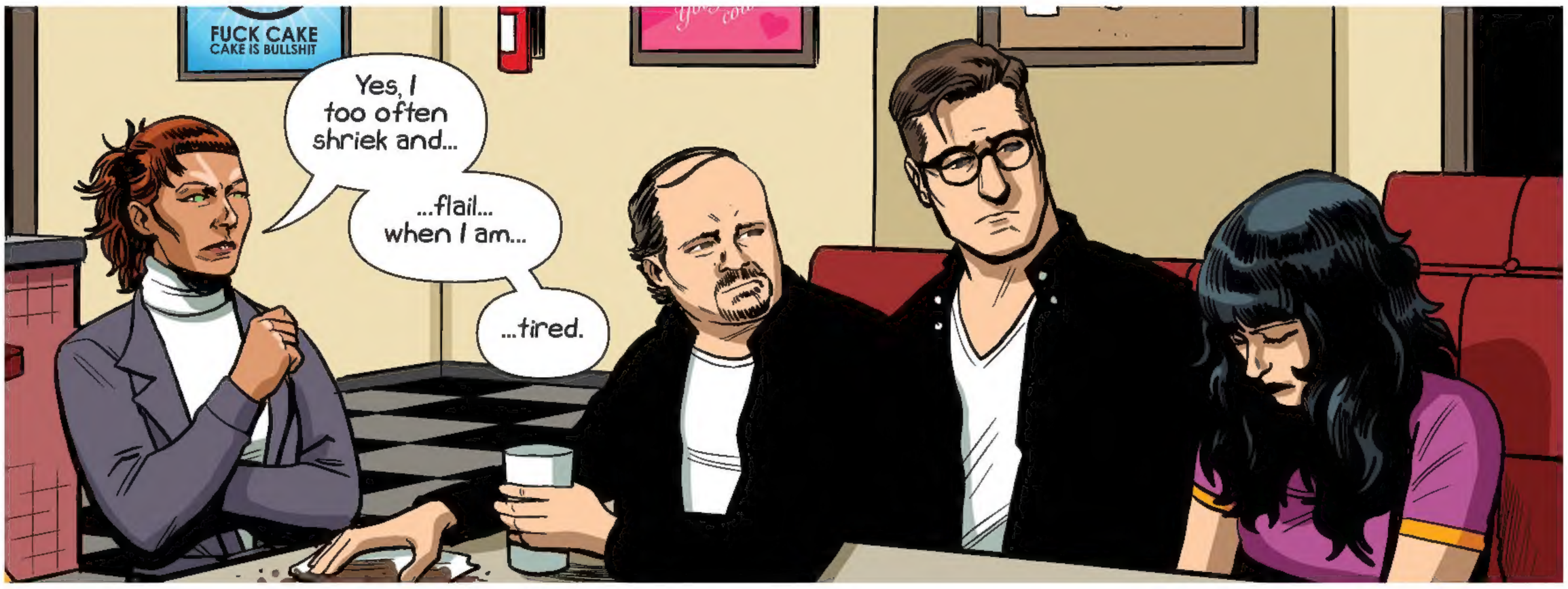
I'm just... sometimes I...

I'm tired.

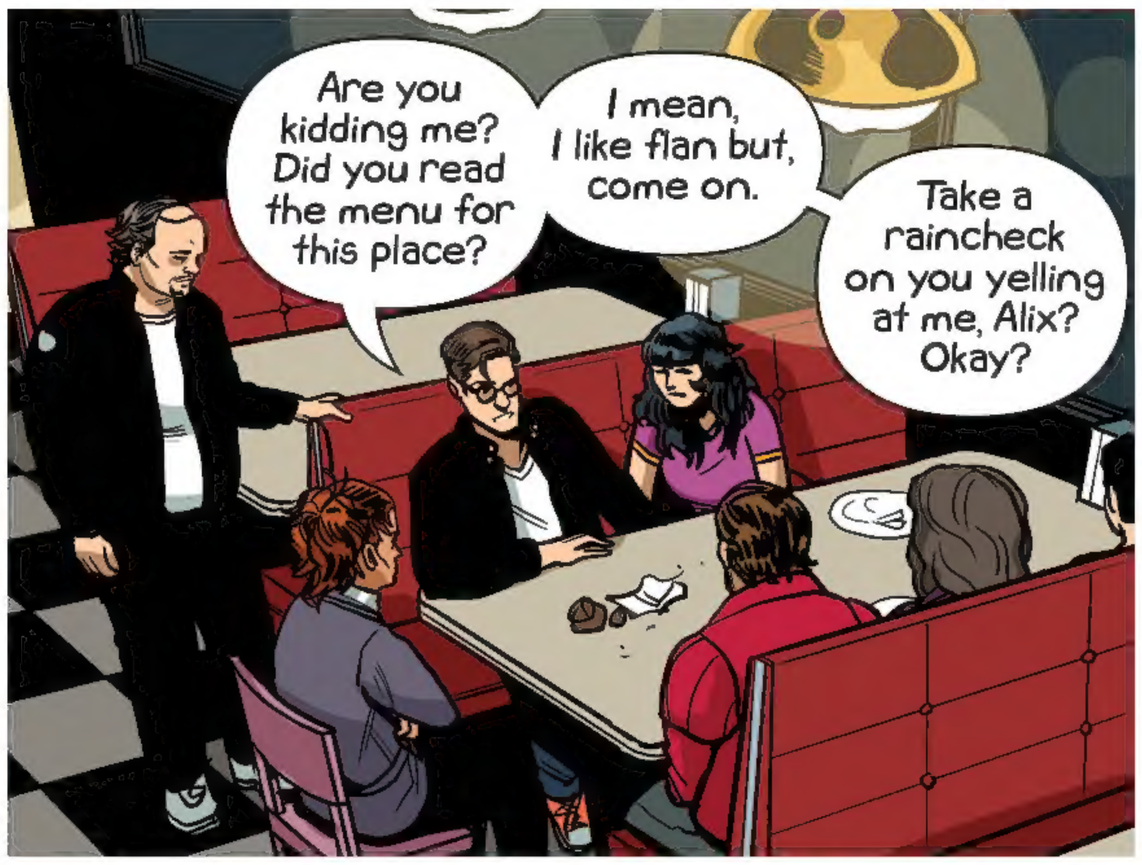
I had

bad dreams or something last night.

I'm tired.


FUCK CAKE
CAKE IS BULLSHIT
Yes, I too often shriek and...
...flail... when I am...
...tired.

You wanna take off?
You just got here. Don't you want to eat?


Are you kidding me? Did you read the menu for this place?
I mean, I like flan but, come on.
Take a raincheck on you yelling at me, Alix? Okay?

I know the punchline anyway, you're right and we're not, I'm a dummy, blah blah.
'Night all.

Do you ever remember things?
After they happen?
Isn't that how remembering works?

(*sigh*)
You put it like that and it sounds crazy.

I don't like to think about myself like that, I mean.

It— I just—

I'm more than that.

I guess I never really thought about it before. Not really.

Like, I'm not a cop, I'm not a *soldier* or anything. How bad did I really

It feels like *faking* to say anything that happened to me was *traumatizing*.

I mean, bad things *happened*, but, like.

Around me.

When I think back I don't think, like—

—I don't remember ever feeling like, oh, god, *trauma*.

I felt

UNDERSTANDING COMICS: THE INVISIBLE ART
155.11 FRA

Learning To Love Again After We Die
155.116 CAN

Dealin' Breakin' Blows
155.12 KAN

It's Okay That You're Not Okay But Frankly I'm Fine
155.125 WIL

Introverts Outdoperform Everyone
155.3 FRE

LOLITA
VLADIMIR NABOKOV
813.54 NAB

The Joylessness of Sex
Why Even Bother, Really

LOSS
155.33 FEO

Wherever You Go There Is Unless You're Somewhere El
155. BRE

001-
099
Dicktionaries &
Encyclopeenias

100-
199
Feelings
& Shit

Um, it's called the *Dewey Decimal System*, not the Alphabetical Asshole... uh.

Ooo
Spo

System—

APPLETON
1976

Caught you!

We're gonna have to *hire you* soon if you don't

stop

before it's too late, Kuber.

There's still

time

blahh

You okay?

Because this sounds like more than tired.

Yeah.

I am but

APPLETON
1976

Suze...

...is it happening again?

Can I, uh.

Can I ask you something?

Am I going crazy?

I think as long as you...

I think as long as you worry about going crazy...

You're probably not.

...Wwwwwhy?

Okay.

For a little while now—

Oh god, I can't. This is crazy.

No, lady, shitting in your boss' plant because you don't like your job is crazy.

I should've been shitting on his *desk*.

Like a reaaaal sane-o.

No, I'm sorry. I can't.

Honey. Not only have I spent extended periods of time lookin' at your b-hole, but also remember that one time I found your

True.

Hoo boy.

Wait— "extended"?

Well, sometimes—I mean, it's right *there*.

If you're, y'know, you're right on top of me and I'm under you and all.

You have a freckle.

Right there on one of the little—

If you ever die in a plane crash maybe that's how I can identif—

You know what, never mind.

Over the last few days something weird has been happening.

Like, stuff will happen—

Anything. Nothing. Totally at random, but—

But I get this, like, *flash* in my head.

And the flash is, like—

—like I remember that I already *dreamed* it was gonna happen.

But not, like, dreamed-it, dreamed it. More like I caught a glimpse of it while I was sleeping.

Thing is, though—

APPLETON
1976

—I'll remember that I already dreamed it? Like a long time ago? Or it's something

that's coming. A glimpse of something like—

like a perfume or something you smell, just for a second.

But it's not just, like—

I *felt* the future. Like I *felt* what's coming.

I think something bad is going to happen.

And I think it's our fault.

I think I've maybe been dreaming about it my whole life.

Oh, honey.
That happens to *everybody*.
Really?
чушьсобачья! Бег? Дрянь
No.
That's the craziest fucking thing I ever heard.
No, not like—
—not that *you're* crazy, that *thing* is just—
чушьсобачья! Бег? Дрянь
Suzanne, nothing matters to me but you. But us.
I don't care about the bank, Badal, Kegelface, any of it.
We never have to talk to any of those people ever again. We can leave town, shave our heads, join a circus.
S'long as it's with you. Okay?
You mean it?
Promise.
Okay.
Everything's gonna be okay in the end.
And if it's not okay—
—it's not the end.
I mean— you feel that, right?
You're feeling okay?

PASSIN' haha ha ha LAFFS!

with BUD & DEWEY ha ha

Hey folks, we're sorry to cut in right here before this issue's big shocking finish, but we have something *important* to talk about.

You know we like to have fun here at SEX CRIMINALS but you know what isn't fun?

Endings. And pagination.

And as we're entering the grand finale of our little romp, these are both issues that, from time to time, come with "issues" of their own!!!

Not to get too "inside baseball," but comic books usually occupy even numbers of pages. Sometimes 20, sometimes 22.

Although if you're *this* comic, sometimes it runs up to 32 pages!!!

Jeez!! Wrap it *up*, Tolstoy!

But seriously, folks—

Sometimes endings can get pretty serious.

Heavy feelings can feel heavy and *not* fun! But that doesn't mean we shouldn't still feel them. Feelings are good and important!

All of this is to say that between the pacing of this issue, and the seriousness of its scenes, not only did we end on an *odd* number of pages—

*But* we found it particularly *light* in the *laffs* department!!

That's right, honeybun, we did. This issue is super not funny.

And while nothing can be funny all the time, we still felt like we owe you, our beloved audience, at least a *couple* more chuckles per issue!

So welcome to "Passin' Laffs," where I, your humble busdriver Bud S. River, alongside my true love Dewey, will tickle your funny bon

Oh shit we ran out of space—

More laffs next time!!!

What the hell is this?

Suzanne.

What the hell is this *book*?

Why are you reading a book about *loss*, you wanna be sad all the time or something?

I'm serious, Suzanne, why are you reading a book like this?

People are going to think—

—think you're *crazy*.

WELL?!?

kabook

SUZANNE, ANSWER ME!

...Wellllll....

Because dad.

Oh, *please*.

You think *you* know about loss? You think—

You are being so *ridiculous!* We are *fine!*

*You* are fine!

s Kitty!

I think maybe, uh.

Could I talk to someone? Like a doctor?

God, Suzanne, you're so *funny*.

mwah

Running to the liquor store. Can I getcha anything?

This

Ha! See, you're not the *only* funny one.

NO ADULTS Allowed.

Back in ten.

Uh.

What?

"Tusk"!

It's "Tusk"!

FLEETWOOD FUCKIN' MAC

...Shit.

It's the Mac!

You don't like the Mac?

—whoa—

—why are we here?

It's just nice to have conversations in places other than that diner.

Probably more fun to draw, too.

FLEETWOOD FUCKIN' MAC

Easy there— you're looking a little wobbly.

Can, uh...

Can I ask you something? As a doctor?

Sure.

...Dooooo...

Do you know anything about...

...trauma?

FLEETWOOD FUCKIN' MAC YOU BUMMIES

Not really my field, Suzanne.

Why do you ask?

I guess it was, what I was wondering was—

—like, what even *is* trauma?

I mean, I know the definition, but, like, why—

—*how* is it that, like, horrible things can happen to some people, and they can be okay, and, and, like—

—relatively fucking *average* things happen to other people and they're totally fucked up forever?

Like, I mean, how come I can be traumatized but not have actual, like, trauma?

I wasn't shot, I wasn't attacked, I wasn't in *war* or a horrible fuck—

—fucking *accident* or—

Nothing *happened* to me.

I'm *fine*.

Suze...

Are you feeling okay?

Yeah.

Yeah, I'm okay.

Just tired, is all. And I miss you.

Please limit phone calls to 10 minutes maximum wait why are we saying "please" we're a prison FFS

NO ERECTIONS while talking on the phone.
Erections will be punished unless that causes more erections.

I miss you too.

Three weeks, two days to go, baby. We got this.

Everything's gonna be okay.

# LETTER DADDIES

SEND YOUR THOUGHTS, SEXUAL QUESTIONS, AND APPARENTLY BRIMPER PIX WOW TO *EMAILTHESEXCRIMINALS@GMAIL.COM*. YOUR TYPOS/SHAME ARE YOUR OWN AND WILL BE RUN AS RECEIVED. ALL ASSUMED OK TO PRINT UNLESS STATED OTHERWISE.

**A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO #26...**

**...I realized that with Suze and Jon back together, as we left them at the end of issue 25 (go ahead, reread the entire run to date since it's been so long, I'll wait) that I kiiiiinda didn't care about the whole robbing-the-bank story anymore (if I ever did, really. I mean, spoilers I guess, but this hasn't ever really been about the bank, or the bank robbery, y'know?)**

**The book is, was, and always has been about Suze and Jon. With the two of them reunited... I had this moment of realizing that that was what I cared about. I cared about the two of them caring for one another, and once they learned to get out of their own ways and do that, I could feel my interest go right out the window. What's left to tell? Two people fell in love, but almost didn't let themselves, but then they did, and now it's good.**

**That's kinda true, anyway. Not entirely but... but it was a real thing I had to figure my way around. I didn't care about the robbing-the-bank stuff anymore. And I knew that meant I had to stop writing it for a while. Because why would anyone else care what happened afterwards if I didn't care, writing it? That's a bad sign, gang. Bad in that -- well, I think I'm a poor liar and bad at hiding whatever it is I'm feeling, especially in writing. I think it's obvious when I'm writing angry, or sad, or bored; I can't hide not wanting to do it terribly well. And I found myself not entirely wanting to do this next arc, at least how Chip and I had sortakinda conceived of it.**

**So rather than force it, I let it cook until I could find my way back into the story.**

**And, concurrent to that, it's not like we weren't doing anything; Chip has written like 87 books and won 11teen awards; I grew a beard, then shaved it, then grew it back, then shaved it off again. I mean, we've been working, just not on this.**

**(Also, and not for anything, but that's the whole point of doing comics that you own and control outright. If it's not going to be good, you can go dark until it's good again. You can rest up and recharge and tell the best story you can. I get that it's frustrating and annoying, but you know what's even MORE frustrating and annoying? A book you love becoming shitty and by-the-numbers and outstaying its welcome before its sales atrophy into the abyss.)**

**At some point between beards I came to understand that Suze and Jon not giving a shit about the bank anymore, in the same way I didn't give a shit about the bank anymore, was the story. That the end wasn't necessarily the story of Suze and Jon, but the story of their world and the mess their falling in love made of it. Because resolving that, I could get into. It was the end of the book, we knew; so it was an entire arc about endings. About cleaning their mess up, repairing what could be fixed, and burying what couldn't for all the characters caught up in their whirlwind -- that was a story I still wanted to tell and, even better, knew (as much as I ever know anything so, y'know, grain of salt) I could tell.**

**And so here we are, at long last.**

**I sincerely regret that, while we let ourselves lie fallow, Kieron Gillen and Jamie McKelvie did NOT respect our wishes and they completed their epic pop statement in THE WICKED + THE DIVINE. How dare they. I felt in some ways this was a race we were running together, even during those times when half of us were not running at all but were, as per the above, letting ourselves lie fallow but HEY, whatever, go ahead and 'wrap your book up' guys, fine. It was a glorious book, and a glorious ending, wonderfully and brutally earned. But it was all bullshit because we didn't end publication in tandem on the same day, then celebrate in a four-way murder-suicide-by -crossbow pact. SOME OF US still believe in honoring our promises, Kieron and Jamie.**

**Anyway fuck those guys and their beautiful book, they may as WELL have murder-suicided because they're both dead to me now.**

**There will be seven issues including this one in our last arc, the 6th and final, called SIX CRIMINALS (get it). Issues 26-30 comprise the main story. There's the completely insane SEXUAL GARY one-shot drawn by the marvelous and inimitable Rachael Stott. And then both we, and the story itself, will leap ahead three years and three months, to our last issue, #69. Nice.**

**I wonder if there's anything in the ol' inbox? LET'S FIND OUT I LITERALLY HAVEN'T LOOKED SINCE WE PUBLISHED ISSUE 25.**

•

Hey Matt & Chip,

I've been dying to ask for ages. What or who the hell is a brimper?

## SEX TIP *Want pictures of people fucking hair? Just start a comic about people who have sex and stop time and rob banks, I guess!*

---

It's not something I want to google in this Orwellian age, so please can you enlighten me in the letters page of your fine all ages periodical?

Be seeing you,

Bruce M.

**It's hairfuckers, Bruce. Hairfuckers.**

•

Just caught up on the last few issues and wanted to say thanks for 4 of the most depressing comics I've ever read in my life.

Looking in the bright side, at least the letters page is back.

Cheers

Steve H.

**Our bodies are sacks of chemicals, and brains are just lumps of fat and wires. Eyeballs are cameras made out of goo and tubes! It's stupid; bodies are stupid, brains are stupid, and pretending we don't feel what we feel is even more stupid. Writing this dumb book has forced me to feel and deal with all kinds of shit I spent literal decades trying to avoid. I didn't mean to, but it happened anyway, and I think the only reason I'm writing a letter column in our 26th issue is because I felt it all out there on the page.**

**Also if my brain is gonna kill me one day, I at least ought to exploit it and make money off of it for my family before it super-fucks me, y'know?**

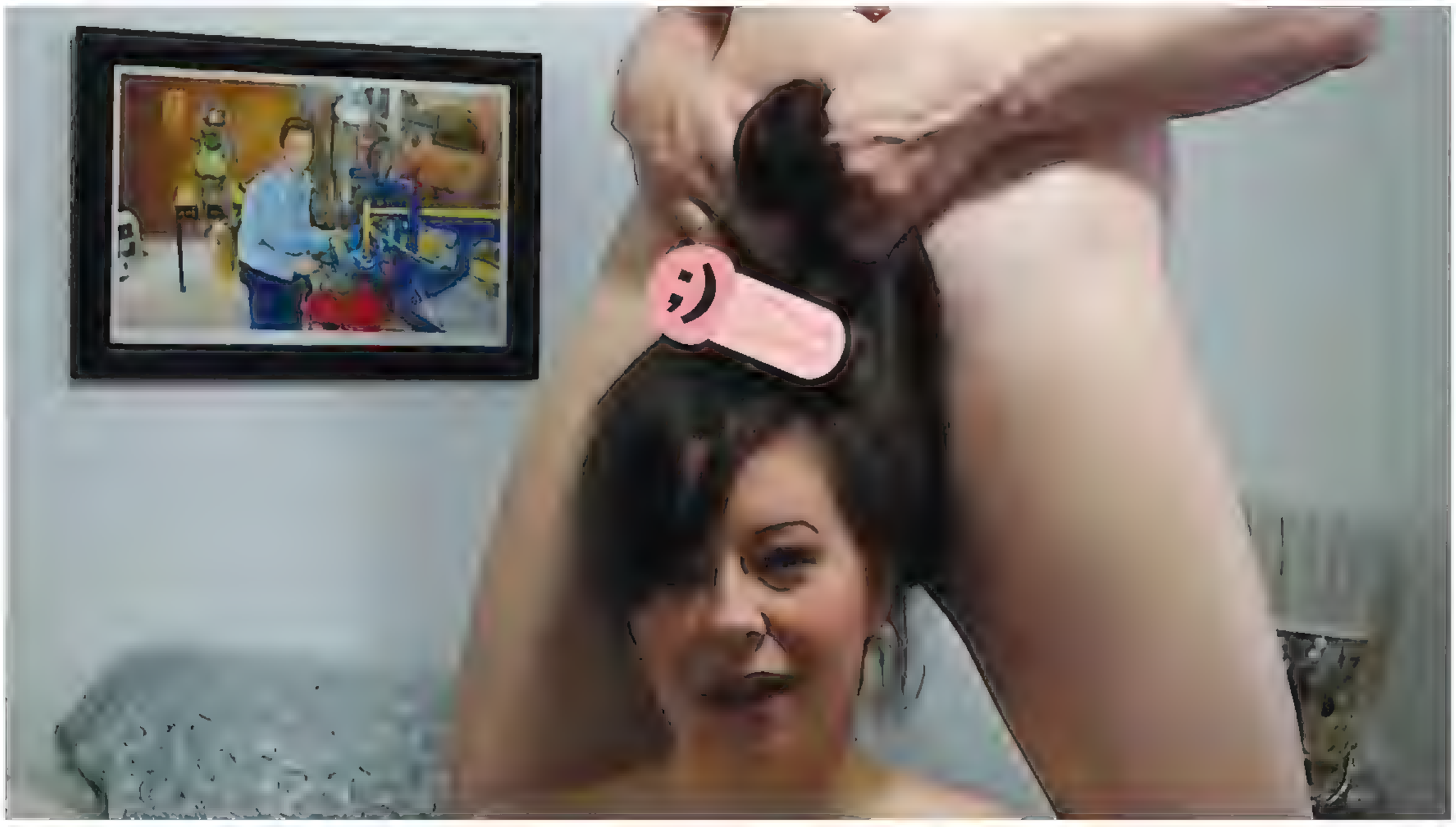
***I get to DRAW his brain full of fat and wires and I love every second of it!! -CZ***

•

Longtime reader first-time "letter daddy". Just wanted to share that the inclusion of a roller rink as a meeting place at the end of issue 24 really put the character Dr. Glass into perspective for me. The childhood rink in my hometown just outside of Chicago closed last month, and the characters that would show up there on the regular were nothing short of eclectic, weird, fun and ... I now realize probably deviants! Sadly, I didn't get the chance to give Orbit Skate Center one more go around before it closed, but imagining Jon and the gang there gave me all kinds of the feels (someone, please save the fading roller rinks). Thanks!

Peter M.

**Who knew, all this time, all Doc really wanted to do was roll quad and jam out to the Mac? I mean, I should've, if I was a real writer, but I'm not and I didn't until I wrote it, but you know what I mean.**




*Truly committed fans Madeleine and Andrew and ... world-famous artist Brandon Bird?*

**SEX TIP** *If you're having trouble performing in bed, just picture the audience in their underwear*

---

**Also, and this is a fun "behind the scenes" bit of trivia: I felt so guilty for asking Chip to draw page after page of people sitting in rooms and talking I wanted to find a gathering place where there'd be physical action to draw that wasn't just sitting in a diner booth. So, the roller rink was born.**

**You'll notice we're right back at the diner this issue though, so, fuck my shit. Or really, fuck Chip's, I guess, I don't know.**

***Chum, if there's one thing you need to know about me, it's that I hate locations. -CZ***

•

Breaking my letters page cherry with this one.

When issue #1 of Sex Criminals came out, I was working part time at my local comic shop (SHOUTOUT TO GRAHAM CRACKERS COMICS EDGEWATER). Every time a new issue or trade came out, you bet your ass my Employee Pick Of The Week sign was stuck squarely in front of it.

I haven't read The Secret, but I'd imagine it works the same way as selling people on your book -- if you fish for 'em, you'll find the right kind of weirdos in this world. Congrats on crafting probably the best fishing hook for this purpose.

ANYWAYS -- last year, I got a job as a gogo dancer at Chicago's best (and only?) gay strip club. I still fill in at the shop now and then, but these days the same passion and energy I used to put into selling comic books I now direct into making my bootycheeks clap onstage a few nights a week.

Here are some lessons I've learned from my first 7 months of being a stripper:

1) The Universe sometimes displays its sense of humor by cruelly putting you $1 short of earning $69 to Nicki Minaj's Anaconda. Accept this and laugh WITH The Universe.

2) Sometimes, people think it's sexy to -- mid-booty roll -- rub dollar bills on the delicate, exposed flesh of your anus. IT DOES NOT FEEL SEXY. DOLLAR BILLS ARE ROUGH. BOOTYHOLES ARE SOFT.

3) Stripper perks include free access to a 24-hour gym at the local bathhouse across the street. There is NOTHING. IN. THIS. WORLD. quite like setting up the squat rack at 1am and hearing the wet, slapping sounds of group sex emanating from the shower area behind you and thinking "yes, absolutely, this is just a normal Thursday night" before continuing with your workout.

4) I've learned to ditch any limiting, preconceived notions of what a Sexual Person looks like and just trust that warm, wet, prickly glow inside when it finds itself activated.

I can't tell you the number of times I've been called over in the club by somebody on the "hot" end of Society's Attractiveness Spectrum (seriously, we need to quit it with that) and felt absolutely nothing. And then not even five minutes later, encountered someone who I wouldn't imagine being typically attracted to and found my body UTTERLY OVERWHELMED WITH AROUSAL.

5) Along with #4, the CONSTANT display of sexual currency that goes on in our world, not just the strip club.

A big part of my job is talking to people when I'm not onstage. Specifically, listening to their stories and absorbing as much as I can about their lives. I'm always struck by the sheer volume of experiences and object lessons in how UTTERLY INVISIBLE so many of us are taught to feel. Particularly about our bodies.

Now, I may have abs and some semblance of an ass NOW. But I didn't always. I've been underweight, I've been overweight, and at NO point did I have any desire to look like a fitness model (nor do I look like one currently). Any muscle tone I'm sporting now was borne out of a desire to associate a racing heart with exercise -- and NOT the inevitable, oncoming threat of immediate death that accompanied the anxiety and panic attacks I struggled with for years. Physical fitness was a final step in helping me overcome that fight, and now the struggle has become to continue for personal growth rather than succumbing to vanity and the desire of being bigger or looking hotter so I can make more money in the club.

And that struggle has become, frankly, very real. Because the way people approach me ever since I wavered closer to that "hot" end of Society's Attractiveness Spectrum vs. before is sometimes really gross. Often it makes me angry.

When you outwardly wear the clothing of toned muscles, a twerk-able ass, and fluid, performative sexuality, PEOPLE TREAT YOU LIKE YOU DESERVE THINGS THAT THEY DON'T. It's fucked up. And I don't think this is a natural state of mind. It's something we've learned and I've made it my mission to unlearn it.

**SEX TIP** *Sometimes just saying "I love you" during sex is a turn-on, first date or not*

---

SO BRINGING IT BACK TO SEXCRIMZ: One of the things I love most about your book -- and I've sold I don't know HOW many copies of it at this point for this exact reason -- is how it portrays everyone as a worthy, sexual being. Story + art + letters pages; through and through. REAL sex, REAL people, REAL experiences. Not just something for the airbrushed instagram bodybuilders or pornstars or lingerie models or strippers of this world. It's innate, everyone's got it, and no one is more deserving of accessing it than anyone else based on their outward vessel.

It's a lesson that's been mirrored time and time again for me in the strip club, so I thank you for making me a part of it here first before I started doing my best to live it out there in fantasyland.

OH, and if either of you find yourselves in Chicago on a Wednesday or Saturday night, stop by the Lucky Horseshoe Lounge. I'll booty clap you both into another dimension, on the house.

xo,
Ryan QT

(PS I've def given out top notch blowies to both Silence of the Lambs and Nightmare on Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors, so ADD EM TO THE LIST BOYS)

APOLOGIES FOR THE LENGTH

**AHHH THERE IT IS THE OL' LETTER COLUMN MAGIC IS BACK!**

**THIS LETTER IS MAGIC AND I HAVE A LOT I WANT TO SAY. First and foremost, Ryan, is THANK YOU. I worked retail myself and remember how easily I could tilt into disdain or dismissal for comics when I was on that side of the glass counter; any time ANYone in the world of comics retail supports us, I think about how hard that must be sometimes for them and I appreciate it all the more.**

**Although after that last letter I'm wondering if maybe that's just me, because MY particular bag of fat and wires and chemicals is extra bullshitty. I dunno!**

**This letter makes me feel like maybe we're not crazy for the previously-mentioned SEXUAL GARY annual/origin story/one-shot. Because it's about someone who's attuned into that kind of attraction and connection to sexuality you describe – Gary's a guy that finds something fuckable about everyone, like some kind of sexual empath. But it's all done in the insane world that SEX CRIMINALS lives in so who knows. I wanted to write the POV of someone who could find something to love -- physically -- about the entire world, because everyone in the entire world is entirely different and unique from everyone else. My biggest worry (aside from the scene of a literal cockfight) is people will think we were laughing at Gary. We're not. He's the closest thing to a superhero in the comic.**

**I was a fat kid growing up -- I was 198 lbs. the day I started 8th grade. Smoking and drugs and a mid-teen growth spurt, then abject poverty, took me down to like 155 at my leanest. I don't know what I weighed when we got married, but I look like I'm dying of a Victorian wasting disease in our wedding photos. As I found gainful employment and stability, though, my weight started creeping back up into the world of the healthy and, eventually, beyond into the realm of the doughy.**

**When we launched this book, I got holes punched through my titties at an Armenian sex club in Toronto and we ran pictures in issue 2. There's nothing like tens of thousands of copies of pictures of my soft shitty body to make me want to get in shape. Add to that I know from CBT (not the Armenian sex club kind of CBT, I mean the Cognitive Behavioral kind) that aerobic exercise is really good for our shitty bags of fat and wires, so I started long-distance running. The good news is that, in tandem with the book launching and doing well, I had never been more photographed or more fit. I see photos of myself from the first year and I look fucking great. The bad news is, I ran a big event and was told afterwards to recuperate and dial back on training and, basically, I haven't run since. The weight started to pile back on, especially because I was still eating like I ran 50 miles a week. I was on LATE NIGHT WITH SETH MEYERS to promote BIG HARD SEX CRIMINALS v1 and was about to burst out of the waistcoat I was wearing.**

**Then things got bad. My weight got as high as 208 last year. That was around the time I started sleepwalking to weigh myself at night. But I was asleep, so the scale always said like 490 or whatever, because I was dreaming, but also I was up and down all night weighing myself. I've always had body dysmorphia and eating issues, but now it was making me actually exhausted.**

**I'm not a sex worker, and I've been married for seventeen years -- by which I mean only to disqualify myself from**

**SEX TIP** *Sex is like pizza. Even when it's bad, you still got to use your Domino's coupon.*

---

certain comparisons with the above; perception of my sexual attractiveness only matters to me with regard to my wife (sorry Chum), and I don't earn my living shaking my moneymaker or clapping my bootycheeks – but what I noticed was how poisonous my perception of myself became. How toxic the way I spoke to myself had become, how I resisted looking at myself, how I'd physically treat myself, even. It was punishing and awful and gross.

I've plateaued around 190 now, but I know it's not a linear progression and I think I understand that, ultimately, the better I feel (in all ways), the longer I'm going to live, period. I am a long way from better, but I'm even further away from that lowest point. I've worked hard to get a grasp on eating, I'm getting more exercise (not running like I was but I'm at least moving and sweating again), and most of all I've worked really hard on recognizing the sound of that voice in my head, and to resist, at least a little bit, its noxious influence on me. It's a process.

"People treat you like you deserve things they don't" is going to haunt me in all the best ways, Ryan.

I used to live at Belmont and Sheffield. It was in a weird zone between Boystown, Wrigleyville, and the last gnarly SRO hotel in all Chicago called THE DIPLOMAT. We used to call the neighborhood BOOZETOWN. At some point all of my roommates worked at The Manhole, which at the time was a couple doors down from Chicago Comics, around the corner on Clark. I drank there sometimes when my roomie-barbacks could spot me a couple heavy pours, and while surely there would be from time to time the booties clapped or the occasional wet slapping sound, it was more than anything a bar, alas. Viva la Lucky Horseshoe.

I looked at the neighborhood on Google Maps not long ago and I doubt I could afford to buy a cup of coffee there anymore. At the time it was a total shithole.

And never apologize for length! Only apologize for girth.

•

i cum too fast

Andreas D

AHHH THERE IT IS THE OL' LETTER COLUMN MAGIC IS BACK!

Andreas, you should try gaining 60-70 lbs until you feel like you don't deserve to cum at all, then slowly work your way back to having the self-esteem required to orgasm again. U can do it!!!

*Or just think about baseball and how stupid it is, except for the fact that its greatest hero Babe Ruth had, like, an extra 60-70 pounds on him. -CZ*

•

You guys should totally get Erica Moen to do a XXX cover for you. She is local to Portland, OR, and she draws the Oh Joy! Sex Toy strip every week. Her style would fit right in with what you guys are doing, and she's already a big fan of your work.

Sheep D.

Oh man! Shit, you're right. And I love Erika and all her work (available online at https://www.ohjoysextoy.com/ and her patreon is https://www.patreon.com/erikamoen) and she continually inspires me with how open she is about not just her sexual adventures, but her mental health struggles. I don't know why we didn't ask her. I guess it's because we are so stupid!

Our FINAL XXX ARTIST LINEUP is as follows:

26 - Jason Latour
27 - Aud Koch
28 - Vanesa R. Del Rey
29 - Jen Bartel
30 - Kevin Wada

AND DO YOU KNOW WHAT IS GONNA HAPPEN FOR #69?

WE ARE GONNA GET AS MANY AWESOME PEOPLE AS WE CAN TO DO XXX VARIANTS AND DO BLIND BAGS. Maybe we can get Erika!! WE WILL ASK!!! THANK YOU SHEEP!

*Anyone who DOESN'T draw a XXX cover? They're a coward. I'm looking at you, Jamie McKelvie. And trust me! I don't WANT to look at you! -CZ*

•

Hello again Crim Chums.

It has been a while, right? How you guys doin'? Since last I wrote, I've read wayyy more bizarrely arousing comics, had more interesting sexual encounters, made a lot of friends, and for me everything is not the same as it was, in a good way.

In 2015, I was in a strange place geographically (Saudi Arabia) as well as emotionally. My email - signed "Fred S." - asked you for

**SEX TIP** *Remember: tickling can be a sexual thing for some fucking reason*

---

advice on the mutual, ongoing, unconsummated infatuation I had with a woman in Massachusetts, and how it would never become a real, fulfilling relationship. Directly, you gave me the answer to that particular problem - and I appreciate that - but indirectly, you gave me the answer to the overall problem, which is why I'm writing.

The email appeared in Sex Criminals #13, titled "Bace". It's the only physical copy of a single Crims issue I own. Partly because I found it gorgeous and thought-provoking beyond my wildest dreams, and gave me a serious education on the nature of asexuality. But also because a part of it...touched me.

We human beings love detective stories, I'm told, because we want to solve mysteries. Writers like Poe, Christie and Conan Doyle set up all the clues for us to follow along and it's only at the end that the Detective confirms if we were right or wrong. And, it can be argued, real life is full of mysteries - some of them erotic, hopefully few of them involving murder - and we're all collecting our clues, waiting for one big explanation to tie together all the loose ends and bring us the satisfaction we need.

Unlike Alix, I'm not Asexual, or in high-powered employment, or possessed of super-powers. But I have an abusive parent. For my

**SEX TIP** *There's NO shame in using lube! Use plenty and use it often! What? Oh, ha ha yeah I work for a lube company, but I swear this isn't about that. Even if I—*

---

entire life, a person responsible for raising me made me feel helpless and inadequate; gave me the idea that without their control, I would amount to nothing. They reinforced this in ways that didn't leave scars, made me believe that this was not just their opinion but the objective truth.

I didn't really, properly accept all of this until 2 months ago, mind. But for years after I bought Criminals #13, a single line haunted me. "I am everything I need." Why did I find that so attractive? Why couldn't I stop thinking about it? In the ongoing mystery of my own unhappiness - the same one which led me into my doomed affair with the woman in Massachusetts - you had handed me a vital clue.

In the last year, I met, dated and moved in with the love of my life, and in the last few months, I took steps to cut my parents out of my life. Without the former, I might never have done the latter; though a positive move, it would have been impossible without unconditional love in my life. And I don't think I would have achieved that without encouragement - from friends, experiences, journeys - and from little clues to the grand mystery. Clues like "I am everything I need".

So from my current place of comfortable happiness - with a partner who makes me feel truly loved and happy and capable of reciprocating - I want to offer you my sincere thanks for your help in getting me there. Your comic is a work of art, and - in oh so many ways - it is truly touching.

I hope you and yours are all in fine spirits and good health.

With renewed regards,

Fred S.

**Fred, I am so happy for you -- for your growth, for your survival, for your escape, and for your thriving. Today this letter is everything I need, and I thank you for writing it.**

**My friend John Darnielle of the Mountain Goats dedicated their record THE SUNSET TREE accordingly, and your letter made me think of it:**

***"Dedicated to any young men and women anywhere who live with people who abuse them, with the following good news:***

***you are going to make it out of there alive***

***you will live to tell your story***

***never lose hope"***

**Which is just really good and appropriate here, so I thought I'd just borrow it up right quick. May you continue on your path to healing and joy and believing you are worthy of love.**

**May we all of us believe that someday, every single one of us.**

•

Hi Matt & Chip,

Just wanted to say thanks for making an amazing comic. My best friend from college now lives states away. He introduced Sex Criminals to me and it's been a way we stay closer, chat, and stay in touch.

My most recent visit with him I bought the #SexCriminals Bombsheller leggings for us both.

Thanks for making an awesome comic and helping get our asses into CumWorld.

Here is a pic.

Much love,
Team Hook-Henderson

**Go away with that weak-ass ass-sauce, Team Hook-Henderson, until you can bring A CHIP Z. LEVEL of SPICY ASSOSITY to these Bombsheller Leggings!**

***no no chum I hate that photo so much my ass looks like god just put a butthole in my back then stuck some legs to it and then called it a day why are you making me run it why CZ***

•

***SEX TIP** Try a vibrator that utilizes sonic waves. It can reach deeper nerve endings and also defeat the accursed Venom.*

---

Ye gods, I feel like I owe the entire letter column-reading Sex Criminals crew an apology for accidentally exploding an entire letters section, whoooops. (I know, I know, I am forever behind on my TBR comics stack. And also I procrastinated on typing this because oh my god what do you even say after that?!?)

Matt - thank you for such a heartfelt response! I definitely don't think you would have blown it if you wrote about miscarriage, based on your reaction to my letter. Chip, your response at the end put the perfect funny spin on things. I laughed SO DAMN HARD at that next letter, too. it was PERFECT.

(Special shoutout to Kayla who speed-texted me and was like "IS THIS YOU. IN THE SEX CRIMINALS LETTERS. WHAT DID YOU DO." I <3 U!)

AND I'M SO SORRY I NUKED AN ENTIRE LETTERS COLUMN PLEASE DON'T HATE ME

Love,

Mel J. Y.

**Aww, Mel, don't even worry about it. Look! People don't even REMEMBER the last time there was a SEX CRIMINALS, let alone a SEX CRIMINALS letter column. Thank you for reaching out, then and now.**

**And indeed! May all the shouts out be forever unto Kayla!**

***Thank you, Mel. My response WAS perfect, wasn't it? -CZ***

•

Hi Matt and Chip!

First off, I am at work and away from my comics, so I Googled "Sex Criminals E-mail" trying to find the address (leaving off the "Comic" part) so I might not have a job by the end of today - let's see what happens!

Second, last year at HeroesCon, I'd come up to you at the BrimpUp and mentioned how that Tumblr post you'd written about suicide had helped me out a bunch over the previous year (long story short: divorce, depression, money, etc) and you (Matt) looked at me and asked "are you going to be at the con next year?" and when I said "yes," you replied "me too, so now we made a deal and you've got to come." BUT I just found out that you aren't going to make it, so I wanted to let you know that I'm still going to be there.

Finally, in 2017 I ran my first half marathon (the Brooklyn half, from Grand Army Plaza to Coney Island) and one of my friends made an amazing custom Running is Bullshit shirt!

This year, I decided to do it again, and she made me an updated "Running is Actually Quite Good for You" shirt!

I'd like to request that this particular joke die, because I am dedicated to the bit but have also decided that I kind of hate running that far? I don't know, do what you have to do, I guess.

Anyway, thanks so much for the comic(s), and everything else.

Nicholas D. (the guy with glasses that bothers you at HeroesCon pretty much every year all of the time)

PS - I sent a copy of my Christmas Band's record to your PO Box; I hope you got it!

**SEX TIP** *Try having sex in front of a mirror to determine if you're being fucked by a vampire*

---

**NOT TO BEAT OFF A DEAD HORSE here gang but THIS is how long it's been since our last issue: there has been an entire OTHER HeroesCon between then and now that I WAS able to attend (man did I hate having to cancel in 2018) and Nicholas and I spoke there. But I loved the letter and wanted to run it all the same because 1) content is content and 2) to inform Nicholas he can be expecting a cease-and-desist letter from our lawyers, and to let him know we are going to sue the SHIT out of him !!!**

**Also his Xmas band The Silver Bells can be found here:**

**https://thesilverbells.bandcamp.com/album/its-christmas-everybody**

**And their album "IT'S CHRISTMAS, EVERYBODY!" is a goddamn delight. If you're capable of feeling delight re: holiday music, I mean.**

•

...(A)while back, I wrote into the Kill or Be Killed letter column, asking Brubaker why Fraction doesn't like Lord of the Rings. Because I thought that was funny for some reason. Anyways, this is your opportunity to lay it all out Matt. If you can tell us all about your deepest insecurities and wet dreams, surely you can explain to the world how you don't find Gandalf squaring off against the Balrog totally bad-ass? How you're not inspired by Frodo taking the ring? How you're not saddened by the departure of magic from Middle-Earth?

If it's not obvious, I haven't gotten laid in the last couple of months.

Matthew A.

**Well Matthew, whenever an elf gets on a horse, I fall asleep. THE TWO TOWERS was the first book I ever STOPPED reading. What's the opposite of a kink? Because LORD OF THE RINGS is mine.**

**Someone (fucking Turner, that's who) gave me a HILARIOUS gag gift of a "LANGUAGES OF TOLKIEN" dictionary and my son, 12 years old bless his heart, was THRILLED to get into learning how to talk "Black Speech" which I had to be assured was not, in fact, the racist shitshow it sounded like, but rather just more typical nerd bullshit.**

**This is how my son shall stab his rebellious teenage dagger in my heart: writing term papers in Aulëan and listening to "The Battle of Evermore" on repeat.**

**Fuck it.**

•

***NEXT TIME!***

***MORE AMAZING LETTERS! MORE OF THE COMIC TOO, I GUESS! JOIN US NEXT MONTH FOR ISSUE 27 BECAUSE IT WOULD BE WEIRD IF YOU STOPPED NOW, YEAH?***

# FOR MATURE READERS DUH

RATED **M** / MATURE

YOU MAY HAVE MISTAKENLY THOUGHT YOU WERE PICKING UP A COPY OF THE ALL-AGES TITLE *CRIMINAL*

ZONE